

Message Text

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PAGE 01 OUAGAD 04058 171400Z
ACTION AF-08

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R 171031Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2904
INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY COTONOU
AMEMBASSY LOME
AMEMBASSY NIAMEY
AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L OUAGADOUGOU 4058

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, MASS, MILI, TO, DM, IV, NG, UV
SUBJ: DOD PROPOSAL TO REDUCE SIZE OF ABIDJAN DEFENSE ATTACHE
OFFICE

REF: LOME 2715

1. I FIRST LEARNED FROM LOME 2715 OF THE PROPOSAL TO ELIMINATE
THE SENIOR OFFICER POSITION IN THE ABIDJAN DEFENSE ATTACHE OFFICE.
ALTHOUGH DEEPLY DISTURBED BY THIS RELEVATION, I WITHHELD COMMENT
UNTIL THE VISIT OF OUR DEFENSE TTACHE, JUST COMPLETED, SO I
COULD LEARN FIRST HAND WHAT IS BEING SUGGESTED. SINCE THE ABIDJAN
DAO IS ALSO THE DAO OF THIS EMBASSY I WOULD HAVE WELCOMED THE
OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT ON THE PROPOSAL WHEN IT WAS FIRST MADE
SEVERAL WEEKS AGO.

2. I MUST RAISE A VERY STRONG OBJECTION TO ANY REDUCTION IN THE
ABILITY OF THIS MISSION TO COVER MILITARY AFFAIRS IN UPPER
VOLTA. EVEN THE THREE OR FOUR VISITS A YEAR THAT THE TWO
OFFICERS ARE ABLE TO MAKE AT PRESENT IS NOT ADEQUATE. TO
CUT THIS BY HALF WOULD UNQUESTIONABLY BE A MOVE IN THE WRONG
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DIRECTION. RATHER WHAT IS NEEDED IS GREATER DOD PARTICIPATION
IN OUR COUNTRY TEAM EFFORT.

3. PRESIDENT LAMIZANA OVER THE PAST YEAR HAS MOVED HIS
COUNTRY'S FOREIGN POLICY STANCE IN OUR DIRECTION. A TABULATION
OF VOLTAN VOTES IN THE U.N. AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL BODIES

WOULD BEAR THIS OUT. IN THE COMING YEAR WHILE WORKING TOWARD A SETTLEMENT IN SOUTHERN AFRICA WE WILL NO DOUBT BE LOOKING FOR FRIENDLY AFRICAN VOICES. IT IS NO TIME FOR A MOVE BY OUR GOVERNMENT THAT COULD BE SEEN AS DIMINISHED INTEREST IN UPPER VOLTA.

4. IT SEEMS THAT WE ARE ABOUT TO START A SMALL FMS PROGRAM HERE. WE WELCOME THIS DEVELOPMENT, BUT WE KNOW NOTHING OF THE PAPERWORK AND MONITORING REQUIREMENTS OF THE PROGRAM. WE SHALL HAVE TO DEPEND HEAVILY ON OUR MILITARY ATTACHES IN THIS TASK.

5. IN LIEU OF THE DOD SUGGESTED CHANGE I WOULD LIKE TO PROPOSE THAT THE JUNIOR ARMY OFFICER IN ABIDJAN BE MOVED TO OUAGADOUGOU. HERE HE WOULD BE CENTRALLY LOCATED IN THE COUNTRY THAT HAS THE LARGEST ARMY IN THE REGION. HE COULD TRAVEL BY ROAD TO NIAMEY, LOME, AND COTONOU, THUS ELIMINATING THE EXPENSE OF AIR TICKETS. HE WOULD BE BASED IN A FRIENDLY NATION WHERE HE COULD DO MEANINGFUL WORK BY TRAVELING FREELY AND VISITING MILITARY UNITS ANYWHERE IN THE COUNTRY. HE WOULD BE LOCATED IN THE COUNTRY THAT IS MOST THREATENED BY THE SOVIET-SUPPLIED ARMS BUILD-UP IN MALI. HE WOULD BE ON-SCENE TO HELP WITH THE FMS PROGRAM. AND THE MOVE WOULD BE TAKEN BY THE VOLTAN GOVERNMENT AS A WELCOME INDICATION OF DEVELOPING U.S. INTEREST IN UPPER VOLTA. THE CHANGE SHOULD HAVE NO NEGATIVE EFFECT ON COVERAGE CURRENTLY GIVEN TO NIAMRY, LOME, AND COTONOU. THE OTHER POSTS AFFECTED BY THIS PROPOSAL MAY WISH TO COMMENT ON THE IDEA.

6. IN ANY CASE, I WISH TO RESTATE MY COMPLETE OPPOSITION TO THE DOD PROPOSAL TO SIMPLY ELIMINATE AN OFFICER POSITION IN THE ABIDJAN DAO, WHICH WOULD HAVE THE EFFECT OF

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CUTTING OUR ARMY ATTACHE COVERAGE IN HALF. WE NEED MORE COVERAGE, NOT LESS.
GRAHAM

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